

WHOLE NO. 1094. WILLIAM GREEN, President

Balancing the Budget by the Sales Tax

The major reason given by Democratic leaders in the House of Representatives for their insistence on the enactment of the sales tax is the alleged imperative necessity of balancing the budget, a term which has become a magic word to the Government in connection with taxation and the expenditures.

Some Congressmen even declare that the Government is bankrupt because it has had to borrow funds to add to its income from taxation in order to pay its bills.

It is surprising that politicians can descend to this sort of sophistry. During 1917 and 1918 the expenditures of the Government exceeded the income by twenty billion dollars. This entire amount and many hundreds of millions more were spent to kill and maim human beings and destroy property, or, in the euphemistic language of those who seek to soften the grim realities of war, for "unproductive and explosive purposes."

Were there any arations delivered then about balancing the budget? No one.

Did either the Democratic or Republican leaders then shake the Capitol dome with their denunciations of the Government's bankruptcy because it had to borrow twenty billion dollars to pay its bills? The record answers, No.

But now, in the midst of a depression, with our public debt reduced by billions of dollars since the end of the war, we are compelled to induce this system of taxation because the Government is bankrupt because of the most notorious tax, the sales tax, must be imposed to make the Government's income meet its expenses and save it from bankruptcy.

It is called a "manufacturers' sales tax." In fact, it is nothing of the sort. The Government collects it from the manufacturers. But the manufacturers pass it on to the standards, the wholesalers, and on to the retailers, and the retailers finally collect it from the consumers plus the profits added by every party to the transaction.

In the end it falls most heavily on people whose incomes are so small that they spend all of them for the products the owners of our industrial system must sell in order to have even a margin of profit.

Already those who control work opportunities have deprived around eight million workers of their living, thus increasing the living the sting of charity both to them and their dependents.

These same masters of our industrial life have also reduced drastically the purchasing power and living standards of millions more by wage cuts and part time work.

This mental attitude was fostered and encouraged through their reactionary proposal to still further reduce the standards of living for those who are employed by making them pay a pyramid of taxes to the Government.

The ultimate consumer, and to lower the already starvation standards of those without jobs by increasing the sting of charity to them and their dependents.

The sales tax is an iniquity which must not be imposed on the American people.

Congress and Unemployment Relief

The failure of Congress to provide relief for the nation-wide distress caused by the refusal of employers to employ around eight million working men and women was strongly condemned by William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, in a radio address from Washington on the unemployment situation.

"All classes of people have been hoping," Mr. Green said, "that this economic condition was fostered and encouraged through their belief that when Congress met something substantial would be done to relieve human suffering and to create work opportunities."

They believed that Congress, with full sense of appreciation of the seriousness of the situation, would appropriate funds for relief purposes and launch a campaign of relief which would provide work, directly and indirectly, for millions of people.

In fact, it was this hope and belief which influenced many people to appeal for a special session of Congress last summer.

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President Hoover Signs Anti-Injunction Bill

Washington, March 26.—President Hoover signed the North-South anti-injunction bill which organized labor regards as its new charter of rights.

Under the terms of the law the injunctions issued by the courts in labor disputes are to be null and void. In certain extreme cases, where an injunction is issued in violation of the law, the courts are expressly forbidden to issue an injunction to enforce such contracts.

Curtains Injunction Judges The law also forbids Federal State Courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes prohibiting workers from refusing and new jobs.

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LABOR OPPOSES JUDGE KENNETH MACKINTOSH

A. F. of L. Representative Challenges His Nomination to Federal Bench for His Antilabor Rulings in Washington State Court.

Washington, March 26.—The labor record of Kenneth Mackintosh of the State of Washington was strongly criticized today by a Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the nomination for Federal Circuit Judge by Edward J. Tracy, an attorney representing the American Federation of Labor.

Mr. Tracy cited to actions by Judge Mackintosh in the past, which he was decidedly against labor and in favor of the employers.

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Green Opposes Pay Cut For Federal Employees

Wage and Salary Reductions Not Necessary to Balance the Budget, A. F. of L. President Says—Reduced Buying Power of Government Workers Would Increase Unemployment, Impair Their Efficiency, and Encourage Employers in Private Industry to Slash Wages and Lower Living Standards of Labor.

Washington, March 26.—William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, issued a trenchant statement against the reduction of wages and salaries of Government employees under consideration in both Houses of Congress.

He declared that the pay cut is not necessary to balance the budget, that it would increase unemployment by decreasing the purchasing power of Government workers, seriously impair their morale and efficiency, and have a deplorable effect not only upon the living standards of the employees of the Government but upon private workers in industry by encouraging employers to impose wage reductions.

Mr. Green said: "The proposal advanced by some members of Congress to reduce the salaries of Government employees cannot be based upon the alleged necessity of balancing the budget."

"This is made clear because an analysis of the facts and figures shows that the amount of money which would be saved to the Government, through the imposition of a reduction in Government salaries, would be comparatively small."

"At such an amount would carry little weight in balancing income with expenditures, but such a reduction in the buying power of Government workers would have a deplorable effect not only upon the living standards of the employees of the Government but upon private workers in industry by encouraging employers to impose wage reductions."

"A reduction in the volume of sales, caused by this reduction in wages, would be greater than the actual loss in buying power."

"Such action would have a most disastrous effect, particularly at this time when strenuous efforts are being put forth to increase and enlarge markets and stimulate buying power so that unemployment may be reduced and ultimately overcome."

Impaired Morale and Efficiency "The effect upon the morale and efficiency of Government workers who would be forced to accept reductions in wages would very greatly injure the administration of the affairs of Government."

"The employees of the Government have responded to the appeals made by Community Chests and by unemployment committees and in making this response they have incurred financial obligations which must be met at stated periods."

"These obligations are based upon the belief that their wage standards would be maintained and thus they would be enabled to aid in relieving distress among the unemployed."

"In some branches of the Government Federal employees have been dividing the work available with the fellow-workers and at a personal sacrifice have been making a most direct contribution toward the relief of unemployment."

"There are many thousands of Government employees who are always ready to make sacrifices for the Government."

"Even the members of Congress and expert, trained men and women working in different departments of the Government are receiving salaries far below a fair and just remuneration for their services."

Salaries of Experts Not Too High "No one can dare assert that the salaries paid members of the Supreme Court, the Judiciary, members of Congress, trained men and women employed to do special work for the Government, in addition to the many thousands of Federal employees and commensurate with the services rendered by them and yet, if Congress imposes a reduction in the salaries of Government employees, practically all of those just enumerated will be compelled to endure further personal sacrifice in serving the Government of the United States."

Government Influence on Wage Standards Destroyed "One of the most stabilizing influences in this distressing period of our history has been the fact that the Government has steadfastly maintained wage standards wherever possible."

"If, after three years of economic distress, this policy is abandoned and reductions in wages and salaries are forced by the Government upon its employees, it will have a most deplorable effect both upon the economic situation and upon the efforts which are being put forth to prevent reductions in wages in private industry."

Social Unrest and Discontent Fanned "Labor has experienced great economic confidence during the most trying period in the economic life of the nation."

"It has strongly opposed wage reductions in private industry. In localities where lower wage standards have been forced upon workers employed to do special work for the Government, social discontent is manifested in no uncertain way."

"A reduction in the salaries of the employees of the Government forced upon them by action of Congress would greatly inflame the minds of labor and its friends and thus an intensified state of social unrest and social discontent would prevail."

Pay Slash Would Not Benefit the Government "Some leaders of Congress have admitted that practically no financial benefit would accrue to the Government through the imposition of a reduction in the salaries of Government employees. It has been asserted by some that a reduction in wages should be imposed because of its psychological effect."

"Surely this is not a good and sufficient reason for the imposition of a horizontal reduction in the salaries of thousands of Government employees."

"The real psychological effect would be to influence employers in private industry to further wage reductions."

Sound and Sober Judgment Required "The officers and members of the American Federation of Labor are appealing to the members of Congress to exercise sound judgment at this critical period in the economic life of the nation."

"We are asking them to oppose actively and sincerely all attempts which may be made to impose a reduction in the salaries of the Government's faithful and efficient workers."

American Products Demanded On Public Works Projects "The Committee on Expenditures of the House of Representatives reported on the 23rd of March that the American Federation of Labor Weekly News Service had been ordered to publish a statement in the construction of public works projects."

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